

## Dwell With Us

By Julie Filby



Just as the three wise men arrived to visit Jesus after he was born, ask Christ to dwell in your home with your family. Read the story of the magi's visit (Matthew 2:1-12), and follow up with a traditional marking, or blessing, of the entrance of your home.

**For**  
Young Family

### Season

Winter (consider doing this activity on January 6, the twelfth day of Christmas which recognizes the Epiphany, when the wise men visited the Christ Child)

### Needed

Bible or text of Matthew 2:1-12 (see below), copies of Epiphany Blessing for Home (see last page or write your own blessing), chalk

### Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer to begin:

*A bright star guided the wise men to Jesus. The kings were very happy to see the new baby and they gave him gifts of frankincense, gold, and myrrh. On this Epiphany day, we are thankful for the gift God gave us, his Son, Jesus. We are also thankful for the gifts we received and were able to give to others this Christmas season. We ask that in the days ahead, we remember others and continue the spirit of giving all year long. Amen.*

2. Explain the roots of the Epiphany: the word itself comes from a Greek word meaning "appearance" or "to show oneself." Many Christians observe Epiphany (the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas) as the day the three wise men (also called Magi) visited Baby Jesus and acknowledged that he was the savior the world had been waiting for.
3. Either a parent or a child(ren) comfortable reading from the Bible, read aloud the story of the Visit of the Magi from Matthew 2:10-12.
4. Just as the Epiphany represents "appearing" or "showing oneself," ask the Lord to be present and "show himself" in your home every day by blessing the entrance to your home.
5. Follow along with the Epiphany Blessing for Home, ending together in family prayer.
6. Optional: Since the chalk is already out, if the weather is conducive to being outside, consider a quick art session on the driveway, sidewalk or front porch, as appropriate—drawing your own renditions of Baby Jesus, the Holy Family, the three wise men, their camels, or the bright star they followed. Use your imagination!

# The Visit of the Magi

## Matthew 2:1-12

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.



## Epiphany Blessing of Home

**Prayer leader:** *Peace be to this house and to all who dwell here, in the name of the Lord.*

**All:** *Blessed be God forever.*

**Reader:** *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth (John 1:1-3.14).*

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**Using chalk, write on the outside of your home, above or near an entrance:**

(write the first half of the current year)

**+20**

**Christus  
Mansionem  
Benedicat**

**13+**

(write the other half of the year)

These words mean “May Christ bless this house.” Each word could be written by a different member of the household.

**or you may use the names of the magi:**

(write the first half of the current year)

**+20**

**Caspar  
Melchior  
Balthazar**

**13+**

(write the other half of the year)

Each name could be written by a different member of the household.

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**All:** *Lord God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness and the keeping of your law. Fill us with the light of Christ that our love for each other may go out to all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

